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Landfill to light the way

A solar farm capable of powering up 12,400 homes will be built on the Pulau Burung landfill on the mainland by December next year once it has received the green light from the Penang government. >2

Paving the way for green energy

Work on solar farm in landfill expected to take off in January

By **CHRISTOPHER TAN**
and **GAYLE LIM**
north@thestar.com.my

SOME of the electricity going through the power grid in Seberang Prai, Penang, is expected to be coming from the sun by December next year.

Enough 'solar juice' to power up to 12,400 homes will be coming out of the Pulau Burung landfill through a 20MWh (megawatt/hour) photovoltaic station, one of the largest solar farms in the country.

The solar panels will be laid onto 20.2ha of the landfill, about the size of 13 FIFA World Cup football fields.

The project has received approval from Penang Island City Council (MBPP) as the landlord.

Council Urban Services Department director Mubarak

Junus (*pic*) said MBPP and Seberang Prai Municipal Council jointly owned a section of the landfill where the solar farm operator, PLB Terang, had proposed to lease.

"Both councils and the Energy Commission have approved the project and now it is awaiting the green light from the state government," said Mubarak.

He added that the councils would earn rental from the company and not be involved in the solar farm's operation.

In the full council meeting yesterday, MBPP Financial Management Committee alternate chairman Joseph Ng announced the approval of a 21-year lease,



from 2018 to 2039, for the solar farm.

PLB Terang project manager Mohd Ramsyah Ismail said the capital expenditure of the farm would amount to about RM120mil and construction was targeted to start next January.

"It will definitely be the largest in

Penang. Elsewhere in Malaysia, other companies are planning for solar farms with capacities of up to 50MWh," he added.

It was reported last year that Kedah will see a 50MWh solar farm in Kuala Ketil near Baling, to be built by Edra Global Energy.

As of 2015, solar farms contribute 67% of the 270MWh of renewable energy produced

in Malaysia.

Some large ones in existence are Amcorp Properties' 10.25MWh solar farm in Gemas, Negri Sembilan; Cypark Resources' 8MWh farm on a closed landfill in Pajam, Negri Sembilan; Sunedison's 5MWh farm in Sepang; 10MWh on a parking canopy near KLIA2; and Kumpulan Melaka's 5MWh farm in Alor Gajah.

According to Sustainable Energy Development Authority Malaysia's 2015 annual report, solar farms were the most numerous renewable energy generators given approval to feed into the country's power grid that year, with 2,502 applications out of 2,845.

The other renewable energy applications used elements such as wind, water or bio-gas.

Approved large scale solar farms in 2015 had a combined capacity of 56.79MWh.